





# A Guide to Identifying California Centipede Orders

LITHOBIOMORPHA	GEOPHILOMORPHA	SCOLOPENDROMORPHA	SCUTIGEROMORPHA
			
<p><b>Lithobiomorpha (Stone Centipedes)</b> The Lithobiomorpha is one of two main groups of anamorphic centipedes. At mature length they have 15 segments. This group has lost the compound eyes, and sometimes has no eyes at all. However, they may have facets or groups of facets. Spiracles are paired and can be found on the sides. Leg-bearing segments have separate tergites. Antennae and antennae are comparatively short.</p>	<p><b>Geophilomorpha (Soil Centipedes)</b> The Geophilomorpha bear upwards of 27 leg-bearing segments. They are eyeless and blind, and bear spiracles on all leg-bearing segments – in contrast to other groups, who only bear them on their 3rd, 5th, 8th, 10th and 12th segments – a "mid-body break", accompanied by a change in tagmatic shape, occurring roughly at the interchange from odd to even segments. This group, at 1260 worldwide species is the most diverse, also contains the largest and leggiest specimens at 29 or more pairs of legs. They also have 14-segmented antennae.</p>	<p><b>Scolopendromorpha (Bark Centipedes)</b> The Scolopendromorpha comprise 21 or more segments with the same number of paired legs. Their antennae have 17 or more segments. Their eyes have at least 4 facets on each side.</p>	<p><b>Scutigera (House Centipedes)</b> The Scutigera have up to 15 pairs of legs, but are no longer than 3 cm (1.4 inches). They are very fast runners and are not often noticed until they are seen scurrying across a floor. These are indoor creatures and introduced to the United States, originally from the Mediterranean. They are the only centipede group to retain their original compound eyes. In other orders, adaptation to a burrowing lifestyle has led to the degeneration of compound eyes. They also bear long and multi-segmented antennae, which it tends to rely on more, even though the eyes are well evolved. Some have several unpaired spiracles that can be found along the mid-dorsal line and closer to their posterior section of tergites.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antennae and legs relatively short</li> <li>• Up to 15 segments</li> <li>• Compound eyes absent</li> <li>• Eyes sometimes absent altogether</li> <li>• Facets or groups of facets may be present</li> <li>• Spiracles are paired laterally</li> <li>• Leg-bearing segments with a separate tergites</li> <li>• Terminal legs tend to bunch together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antennae 14-segmented</li> <li>• Comparatively more slender</li> <li>• Without eyes</li> <li>• Penetrates soil to 70 cm deep</li> <li>• Food: insect larvae and worms</li> <li>• Upwards of 27 leg-bearing segments</li> <li>• Spiracles on all leg-bearing segments</li> <li>• Mid-body break accompanied by tagmatic shape</li> <li>• 1260 spp</li> <li>• Most diverse groups</li> <li>• Largest and leggiest specimens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antennae with 17 or more segments</li> <li>• 1 pair of legs per segment</li> <li>• Eyes with 4 facets on each side</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antennae long and multi-segmented</li> <li>• Legs very long</li> <li>• Up to 15 pairs of legs</li> <li>• Rounded head, large eyes, legs are very long</li> <li>• Head rounded</li> <li>• Eyes large</li> <li>• Fast moving</li> <li>• Retain original compound eyes</li> <li>• Single spiracle opening at the posterior of each dorsal plate</li> <li>• Food: flies and other household insects</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Families in North America <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henicopidae</li> <li>• Lithobiidae</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Families in North America The group includes four families: Mecistocephalidae, Neogeophilidae, Geophilidae and Linotaeniidae.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Families in North America: Cryptopidae, Scolopendridae and Scolopocryptopidae.</li> <li>• 21 Species native to North America, north of Mexico</li> <li>• 6 Introduced species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Families in North America: Psellioididae, Scutigera and Scutigera.</li> </ul>